



# Washington State Department of Early Learning

## Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Quarterly Meeting

June 15, 2009, 9 a.m. to 12 noon

# M i n u t e s

### IN ATTENDANCE

#### DEL STAFF

Dr. Bette Hyde- Director

Sonali Patel-Senior Policy Advisor; Presenting

Lynne Shanafelt- Assistant Director, Parent Support & Programs Division; Presenting

Dr. Juliet Morrison- Assistant Director, Partnerships & Collaboration Division; Presenting

Kelli Bohanon- Program Administrator, Head Start; DEL Staff to the Council

#### ELAC MEMBERS

Amber Havens - Educational Training Partners

Lorena Lowell- Child Care Center Director, ELAC Co-Chair

Jada Rupley - Associate Superintendent, ELAC Co-Chair

James Skucy - Executive Director, Benton Franklin Head Start

Nina Auerbach- Chief Executive Officer, Thrive by Five Washington

Leslie Goldstein- Executive Policy Advisor, Governor's Executive Policy Office

Paula Smith - Head of School, University Child Development School

Representative Roger Goodman - Washington State House of Representatives

Robin Higa- Parent

Dr. Ilene Schwartz- Children with Disabilities- University of Washington

Maria Vera- Early Learning Consultant

Sue Winn- Family Child Care Provider

Mary Seaton- Director of Early Learning, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

#### ELAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Charles Earl - Director, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges

Peter Berliner- PRI Makers Network Managing Director, Philanthropy NW- Thrive By Five Washington

Dr. Maxine Hayes - State Health Officer, Dept. of Health

Ann Daley - Executive Director, Higher Education Coordinating Board

Representative Larry Haler - Washington State House of Representatives

Senator Mike Hewitt - Washington State Senate

Senator Claudia Kauffman - Washington State Senate

Marie Zackuse - Chairwoman, Tulalip Tribes of Washington

### **OVERALL PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) is for representatives from the state's early learning stakeholder communities to provide input and recommendations to the Department of Early Learning (DEL) so that DEL's strategies and actions are well-informed and are broadly supported by parents, early care providers, health/safety experts and interested parties. The Governor holds final authority for policy decisions and her P-20 Council will be made aware of ELAC's input to DEL.

### **TODAY'S INTENTIONS**

- DEL staff to report out on progress of subgroups established in October 2008 meeting
- Hear public comment
- Determine next steps

### **WELCOME, OVERVIEW OF TODAY'S INTENTIONS, AGENDA REVIEW**

Co-Chair Jada Rupley opened the meeting. Kelli Bohanon oriented council members to the agenda.

### **INTRODUCTIONS**

Council members introduced themselves. Audience members also briefly introduced themselves.

Director Bette Hyde gave opening remarks. She emphasized that the Governor has charged DEL with the goal of building a comprehensive state system and that the Early Learning Plan is a key component of this work.

### **COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

- Ilene Schwartz shared that Judy Moore passed away recently and that a celebration of her life will be held this Friday at the University of Washington at 3:00 p.m. Ilene also spoke about the Head Start Center for Inclusion at the University of Washington which provides resources and education to Head Start providers about including children with disabilities in all aspects of the program. The Center's first advisory board meeting took place in Washington, DC in May.
- Sue Winn mentioned that the Washington Family Child Care Providers held a conference recently. She also mentioned that SEIU has started offering classes for family, friends, and neighbors. About 800 people have participated and 62 have gone on to become licensed providers.
- Mary Seaton spoke about the upcoming Starting Strong conference which will take place on August 10 and 11. She encouraged council members to consider attending and bringing cross-sector teams. Conference participants may attend as individuals but team participation is highly encouraged. Scholarships to assist with the expense of attendance are available for those who need them.

### **DEL REPORT OUT AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATES**

**Legislative Session**- Presentation (power point) by Sonali Patel, Senior Policy Advisor.

Sonali distributed two handouts: a timeline of DEL reports due to the legislature and Federal Government; and a summary of information about funds available for State Advisory Councils through the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). She provided an overview of key bills passed during the 2009 biennial session:

- SHB 1943: Requiring recommendations for preparation and professional development for the early learning and school age program workforce. This bill reinforced the continuation of the Professional Development Consortium. Brief updates on the Consortium are due to the legislature on September 15 and December 31, 2009; the final report is due on December 31, 2010.
- ESHB 2261: Concerning the state's education system. Sections relevant to early learning are 114 and 115. 114 calls for the creation of a Quality Education Council to recommend and inform the ongoing implementation by the legislature of an evolving program of basic education and the financing necessary to support such a program; includes DEL representation. Section 115 was vetoed; the Governor has asked DEL and OSPI to lead the work to bring forward a proposal next session that ensures that all Washington children have the benefit of early childhood education.
- ESHB 1244: Making the 2009-2011 operating budget appropriations. Sonali emphasized that the department is grateful for the minimal nature of cuts made to early learning and continuing legislative support. ECEAP will see a 2.1% slot reduction as well as some administrative reductions. Funding was continued, at a lower level, for parent, family and caregiver supports. The budget includes ARRA funds for QRIS, DEL will be partnering with Thrive by Five; and for infant/toddler supports. State and ARRA funds will be used to support the R&R network as well as for the Career and Wage Ladder program. State funds, given an equal amount of private funds are found, will be available to develop a Kindergarten Assessment process.
- ESHB 1216: Concerning the 2009-2011 Capitol budget. These funds support some early learning infrastructure. They do not pass through DEL but instead flow through CTED and the community college system.

Sonali also spoke about the American Recovery & Reinvestment ACT (ARRA) which includes Head Start funds available for State Advisory Councils. The application is due in August 2010 although Washington may be in a position to apply sooner because it already has a body (ELAC) which is similar to the requirements for the State Advisory Councils. The handout asks that any organizations or individuals that have ideas to help WA meet the 70% state match requirement should contact DEL as the application drafting work is beginning.

- Robin Higa asked about the current ELAC budget. Sonali explained that last biennium, \$125,000 per year was allocated for ELAC by the Legislature. For this biennium, the ELAC statute is in place, however funds were not available in these tough budget times.
- Ilene Schwartz commented that she would like to see this council (and potentially others) integrated with the existing Infant/Toddler Early Intervention Program's federally required State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC).
- In reference to discussion about the intended use of State Advisory Council funds, Bette Hyde explained that the intent is for each state to create a plan that should build on existing work but it's about more than allocating the money among existing groups doing their own work.
- Kelli Bohanon commented that there will be significant flexibility in how the funding for the State Advisory Council is used. The funding can be applied to the Early Learning Plan and there are many activities that can be associated with this work.
- Sonali emphasized that Washington is in the very beginning stages of this planning process.

Sonali also spoke briefly about the President's 2010 budget proposal. The proposal is now being considered by Congress in preparation for the appropriations bills for the federal fiscal year beginning in October 2009. DEL will continue to monitor the progress of the early learning related areas as the Congressional process proceeds.

**Professional Development Consortium (PDC), STARS, and R&R-** Presentation (power point) by Dr. Juliet Morrison, Assistant Director, Systems, Partnerships & Collaboration.

Professional Development Consortium- The PDC has been working on developing Washington's core competencies since the last time the council met. The PDC met in both April and May. The group has completed their visioning work and broken into two subgroups to move work forward; one to focus on professional standards and another focused on compensation and incentives. The subgroups will draft work and bring it back to the larger group. Subgroups will pull expertise from people throughout the early learning community. The next PDC meeting is in July.

R&R- DEL and the R&R network have met regularly to create an outline and draft the report. The draft includes data gathered from the R&R network and information about how the R&R network supports the work of DEL.

STARS- DEL has been working closely with WAEYC to outline and draft the report. It will include an introduction to STARS, information about annual expenditures and data over time (how many participants have been added over time). The report will also include recommendations for an integrated registry system and information about the challenges of the current system, particularly relating to data and technology issues. The report will emphasize the potential of a robust registry to align the system as a whole. They plan to have a draft of the report out to council members this week for review. The STARS, PDC and R&R reports will all be integrated into the larger DEL report in June, similar to the December report.

- Sue Winn asked if the STARS registry data goes back to when it was required by WAC. Juliet responded that it goes back to 1998 but some data has been lost.
- Roger Goodman commented on the use of video-taped teacher/child interactions being used for evaluation and emphasized the importance of focusing on interactions. Ilene Schwartz mentioned a similar program currently being used by Head Start (through the UW Head Start Center for Inclusion) using small inexpensive flip cameras.
- Lorena Lowell raised the issue of budget shortages as a barrier to professional development.
- Robin Higa commented that she would like to have presenter contact information available so that council members are able to contact presenters after the meeting.

**Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Workgroup-** Presentation (power point) by Lynne Shanafelt, Assistant Director, Parent Support and Programs.

CCDF goals are to: improve access to child care, improve quality, support parent options, and provide subsidies for work, training or school. The current plan is for October 2007 through September 2009. The next two year plan is due July 1, 2009. Since the last council meeting DEL has gathered public input via 480 survey responses, 2 public hearings, e-mail comments and feedback from the DEL Parent Advisory Group. Common themes include:

- Provider requests for more training opportunities
- Need to improve the subsidy system so that it works better for providers and families
- Concerns about school age care
- Issues with inclusive child care/ behavior management issues

The draft plan will be posted today. The next step is to get feedback from regional staff. The plan should be approved in August or September and the federal fiscal year starts on October 1. The plan can be amended as needed over time.

**Early Learning Plan (ELP)** - Presentation (power point) by Bette Hyde and Nina Auerbach.

Nina provided a quick background of the ELP and an update on the current process structure. She explained that the initial workgroup which was formed in October 2008 in response to SSSB 5828 recommended to the council that a broader stakeholder process was necessary. This resulted in the formation of the current ELP Steering Committee convened by DEL and Thrive by Five working in partnership. The ELP Steering Committee is a large group which provides broad representation and will continue to expand to increase diversity, in particular tribal representation. The ELP Management Team consists of Gerrit Westervelt and Karen Ponder from the BUILD Initiative, Nina Auerbach and Molly Boyajian from Thrive by Five, Bette Hyde and Kelli Bohanon from DEL, Lorrie Grevstad from the Department of Health, and ELAC co-chairs Jada Rupley and Lorena Lowell. This group serves to make key decisions with regard to the ELP process. The ELP Coordinating Support Team consists of Kelli Bohanon, Lorrie Grevstad and Molly Boyajian and works as a subgroup of the Management Team to coordinate planning details and work with the ELP Workgroups. The ELP Workgroups are: Access to Health, Social/Emotional, Early Care & Education, Parent & Community Partnerships, Vision, and Meaningful Engagement & Diversity. ELAC remains the final decision making body with regard to the ELP. A visual outlining the structure of groups working on the ELP was presented to the council.

Bette thanked Nina for taking on leadership of this work. She spoke about the discussion within the ELP Steering Committee of the need for a personal and engaged process for gathering broad input for the ELP and that this will take time. The issue is to balance the need to get the work done with giving people the time to share their opinions. Thrive by Five has released an RFP for a consultant to manage this process and write the plan. The Steering Committee also made the decision that the range for early learning needs to be prenatal through age 8. The Steering Committee decided to use the Kids Matter Framework as a starting place for their work and created the workgroups based upon it. ELP Steering Committee members will participate in Race Matters training in August 2009 so that the information learned can be used as a tool in supporting members in appropriately addressing equity and diversity issues in the development of the early learning plan.

The proposed/projected budget for ELP includes \$75,000 of in-kind to create and manage the ELP process; \$75,000 for a consultant; \$25,000 direct support for workgroup costs; \$10,000 for indicator development; \$15,000 for the stakeholder feedback process; and \$10,000 for printing costs.

Bette spoke about the need for outcomes that involve Washington specific data. She emphasized that the December plan is really a draft because of the time needed to do the work and vet/share it widely.

- Ilene Schwartz asked where the RFP could be found. Molly Boyajian explained that it had been circulated by email and agreed to send it to the council, it closes on June 30.
- Ilene also asked about the Race Matters training and inquired whether or not this was something that council members should participate in. Lorrie Grevstad explained that Race Matters is a tool kit that looks beyond race at broader equity issues and stresses the need to be intentional in looking at disparities and disaggregating data to assure that all children are succeeding. Race Matters is provided by the Casey Foundation and they have offered to support the work of the ELP by providing training to the Steering Committee. Bette agreed to include the council in this opportunity.
- Roger Goodman complimented the rigor of the ELP process thus far but questioned when there would be products for the council to see. Bette agreed to send notes to the council. Mary Seaton suggested that a section on the DEL website might be a good way to communicate both with people involved directly in the ELP process as well as the broader public.
- Maria Vera spoke about the need to engage groups and individuals who are not a part of the system, perhaps by the use of a strategic media campaign. Nina responded with information about the King 5 series *Learning for Life*. Sue Winn suggested a blurb about early learning for elementary school newsletters. Maria emphasized the need to include Eastern Washington and that Spanish radio is an effective way to communicate with the Latino community. Nina mentioned that Thrive by Five is currently working with Clear Channel. Mary Seaton spoke about the Early Learning Communications Roundtable as a resource that can be leveraged in this effort to produce an effective and coordinated message. Robin Higa emphasized the importance of strength based messages. Ilene suggested the need to work with PR people to get the content out in a way that people can digest.

## **CLOSING**

Co-Chair Lorena Lowell thanked everyone who has contributed to the ELP process. She provided a quick recap of the meeting:

- Need a statement or phrase that reflects what the Early Learning Plan (ELP) is
- Need a process for feedback and communication about the ELP process, possibly online

Roger Goodman commented that he would like to see child welfare and well-being integrated into this work. Ilene Schwartz emphasized the need to establish clearly what is encompassed in this work now and develop a consistent message before moving forward. Bette Hyde spoke about the issue of balance and the need for a system which gets things done and that that may not be able to encompass everything.

Robin Higa commented on the difficulty of being the only parent representative on the council. Leslie Goldstein emphasized that there are 2 parent representatives required by the legislation and appointed to the Council by the Governor and while council members are appointed based upon qualifications it is also hoped that they will bring many hats to their work here, including that of parents. Robin explained that the issue was not in reference to her personal experience but rather one of creating a sustainable system that anyone could step into.

Lorena asked for public comments; there were none.

**Next meeting:** September 14, 2009 (9:00-12:00) at the Tyee Conference Center in Tumwater.